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Toy's bills would help prevent online sex crimes

LANSING—Legislation that would prohibit people convicted of certain sex crimes from using social networking websites like MySpace was introduced in the state Senate today, said bill sponsor Laura Toy, 6th District.

“Sexual predators have too easily been able to prey on children online,” said Toy. “My bills will prevent these criminals from accessing social sites on the Internet.”

Senate Bills 1479 and 1480 would proscribe the following:

- If a person has been convicted of a listed offense and had used a computer to commit that offense, the person could not access a commercial social networking website.
- If a person has been convicted of a listed offense, but the offense did not include the use of a computer, the person could not directly contact an individual whom he or she knew or had reason to believe was under the age of 18 by means of a commercial social networking website.

A first offense would be a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than one year or a fine of not more than \$1,000, or both. A second or subsequent violation would be a felony punishable by imprisonment for not more than five years and/or a fine of not more than \$5,000.

The legislation will now be sent to committee for consideration.

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